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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/902,172 | 07/11/2001 | Yukari Toda | 35.C15556 | 8800 |

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EXAMINER

ALAVI, AMIR

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2621

DATE MAILED: 10/04/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 09/902,172 | Applicant(s) TODA, YUKARI | |
| | Examiner Amir Alavi | Art Unit 2621 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) 12 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 6-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11 July 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>20040702</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

- Applicant's election of Claims 1-11 in the reply filed on 02, July 2004 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Specification

- Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.
- The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.
- The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.
- The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

- The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

- Claims 6 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.
- Claims 6 and 11 recite the limitation "said binarization means" in "a binarization step", and "a code for binarizing", respectively. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims.
- Claims 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, because of their dependency upon an already rejected base claim.

Allowable Subject Matter

- Claims 1-5 are allowed.
- Claims 6-11 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

- The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The present invention is directed towards an image processing method and apparatus. Each independent claim identifies the uniquely distinct feature “ wherein a binary threshold value calculation for calculating a binary threshold value, based on a histogram, with which a predetermined area in an input image is blurred, while a

binarization for binarizing said input image using said binary threshold value and a calculation for calculating the color of said predetermined area of said input image based on the results obtained by said binarization". The closest prior art, Matsui et al. (USPN 4,931,881), disclose for an image binarization system in which the threshold value used for the binarization process can be adjusted to thereby enable the process to be made more accurate and avoid loss of black areas in characters in the process of digitizing and conversion, wherein the threshold value is based on the average value of pixel density values around the pixels to be binarized; while Tanioka (USPN 4,723,173), discloses an image processing apparatus comprising a first processor for binarizing an input image data with a first threshold level, a second processor for binarizing the input image data with a second threshold level, either singularly or in combination, fail to anticipate or render the above underlined limitation obvious.

Contact Information

- Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Amir Alavi whose telephone number is (703) 306-5913.
- The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Leo Boudreau, can be reached at (703) 305-4706.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

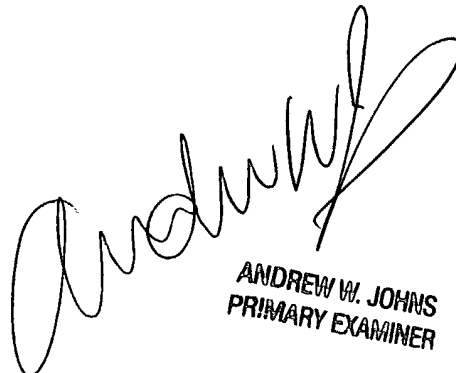
Or faxed to:

(703) 872-9314, ("draft" or "informal" communications should be clearly labeled to expedite delivery to Examiner)

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the T.C. Customer Service Office whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

AA
29 September 2004
Group Art Unit 2621



ANDREW W. JOHNS
PRIMARY EXAMINER